

#### 7.3.4 RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

Socioeconomic surveys of commercial participants in the bay scallop fishery need to be performed to determine specific business characteristics and the economics of working in the fishery, which issues are important to these businesses, attitudes towards management of the fishery, as well as general demographic information. DMF has conducted many surveys of this type in the past, however, none of the surveys has targeted participants in a specific state-managed fishery.

Neither DMF nor DEH currently license or certify bay scallop processors. A method needs to be determined to collect these data. The initial contact might be through dealers who purchase bay scallops. It is possible that these dealers or the fishermen who sell bay scallops to these dealers could be doing the processing. It is not known how many people were shucking scallops in any year since 1994. DMF trip tickets could be used to help identify potential processors. Once the potential processors have been identified, a socioeconomic survey could be devised to gather the data needed.

Currently, there are no data collection efforts in NC to determine the amount of shellfish (including bay scallops) harvested by recreational fishermen. The planned Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL) has no provision for covering shellfish, nor does the current RCGL. Without any way of knowing who is participating in the fishery, it would be impossible to obtain estimates of the economic and social impact of recreational effort in the bay scallop fishery. Should there be a way to identify recreational shellfish participants, a survey similar to the one currently being conducted for RCGL holders could be completed for recreational bay scallop fishermen. Without knowing how many participate in the fishery, it is difficult to accurately estimate the costs of such a study.